

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01447 141230Z

11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 IO-11 /076 W

----- 006609

O R 141150Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6713

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC

/USCINCEUR

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1447

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, FR, LE

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF POSTPONEMENT OF PRESIDENT
ASAD'S TRIP TO FRANCE AND DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON

1. SYRIAN PRESS MARCH 14 CARRIED WITHOUT COMMENT TEXT OF
PREVIOUS EVENING'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTPONEMENT OF ASAD'S
VISIT TO FRANCE: "BECAUSE OF DEVELOPMENT OF SITUATION IN
LEBANON AND CONCERN WHICH IT HAS CAUSED IN BOTH DAMASCUS
AND PARIS, PRESIDENTS HAFEZ AL-ASAD AND VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING
HAVE JOINTLY AGREED TO POSTPONE OFFICIAL VISIT WHICH PRESIDENT
ASAD HAD BEEN DUE TO MAKE TO FRANCE BEGINNING MARCH 15 TO
A DATE IN THE NEAR FUTURE." IT WAS CLEAR THERE HAD BEEN
NO TIME TO CHANGE REST OF CONTENTS OF MARCH 14 EDITION OF
AL-BAATH WHICH CARRIED SYRIAN MEDIA INTERVIEW WITH GISCARD
D'ESTAING AND ANOTHER ARTICLE ON PRESIDENT ASAD'S FORTHCOMING
TRIP. SYRIAN RADIO HAS BROADCAST TEXT OF OFFICIAL ANNOUNCE-
MENT WITHOUT COMMENT.

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2. ON LEBANON, MARCH 14 PRESS PUBLISHED STRAIGHT NEWS REPORTS OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS FROM INTERNATIONAL WIRE SERVICES WITHOUT COMMENT OR NOTICEABLE BIAS IN FAVOR OF ANY PARTY. AL-THAWRAH HEADLINE MERELY READ, "SITUATION IN LEBANON BECOMES MORE COMPLICATED." PRESS CONTAINS NO INDICATION OF OR SPECULATION ABOUT OFFICIAL SYRIAN POSITION TOWARD LEBANESE DEVELOPMENTS.
MURPHY

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NNN

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